

## Hermiston Herald

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**JESSICA KELLER**  
EDITOR  
jkeller@hermistonherald.com  
541-564-4533



**MAEGAN MURRAY**  
REPORTER  
mmurray@hermistonherald.com  
541-564-4532



**SEAN HART**  
REPORTER  
smhart@hermistonherald.com  
541-564-4534



**SAM BARBEE**  
SPORTS REPORTER  
sbarbee@hermistonherald.com  
541-564-4542



**JEANNE JEWETT**  
MULTI-MEDIA CONSULTANT  
jjewett@hermistonherald.com  
541-564-4531



**KIM LA PLANT**  
OFFICE COORDINATOR  
kplant@hermistonherald.com  
541-564-4530

To contact the Hermiston Herald for news, advertising or subscription information:

- call 541-567-6457
- e-mail info@hermistonherald.com
- stop by our offices at 333 E. Main St.
- visit us online at: www.hermistonherald.com

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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Anderson was wrong in letter

Editor,  
Mr. Anderson's comment on me being Hermiston's "new expert on everything" is humorous at best. I, in comparison to Mr. Anderson, have gone to elementary school, junior high and high school in Hermiston and, like others in this fine city, know far more about this city than he does or ever will know. I, by no means, claim to be an expert but have a constitutional right of free speech when I see something I feel is wrong. In the case of appointed positions by City Council, I used my right.  
We have had in the past police shooting their own cars, stealing from nurseries and evidence tampering. We have had judges driving drunk with impunity and chastising people when they showed up in court for drunk driving. In addition, we have had a past mayor running illegal gambling in our town. All these are great examples of corruption I want to avoid now and in the future of this great town of ours.  
Mr. Anderson made a false statement about me in his response letter regarding Mr. Bill Hansell, now Sen. Hansell. Mr. Anderson was off base and confused on when the article was written and its content.

You see, I did write a letter about Bill Hansell when he was running for Senate in 2012. But Mr. Anderson never read the letter or he would have known that I was writing a letter of support and not excoriating then-County Commissioner Hansell. My comments were about Mr. Minthorn running and why I thought he was not the right candidate for our state senator position. I support Sen. Hansell then and I do now, so Mr. Anderson is most incorrect.  
My whole purpose, and I hope Mr. Anderson's purpose, is to make sure these appointments, and the appointment of judge, does not happen. We have the constitutional right to vote for our city judge, and that should not be taken away. I have nothing personal against Mr. Anderson and would never call him a buffoon. It's beneath me as a businessman and human being!

PERRY W. HAWKINS  
HERMISTON

#### Parents need to understand rights

Editor,  
I offer this opinion as a citizen of the United States, member of the greater

ROBERT SMITH  
HERMISTON

Hermiston community, parent of former Hermiston School District students and retired naval veteran.

I would like to bring to the attention of your readers a deception about state standardized testing that has been foisted upon the school boards, our districts, their educators and administrators and the families that fuel the enterprise.

This deception comes in the form of the Oregon Department of Education, (OAR) 581-022-1910, granting the boards and districts' administrative staffs the ability to grant permissions of already established rights of the individual. This is an overreach of the department. Individual rights need no permissive authority. The unrestricted rights of the parent have been upheld by the U. S. Supreme Court at least four different times since 1940 to the present.

Oregon State Department of Education has presented guidelines to which a district may allow or grant permission to the parents of individuals to refrain from, or opt-out of, state-sponsored standardized testing if they fall into only two categories: those with disabilities and those who claim religious exemption.

This is unjust, and I call this paper's editor and staff to research and report on the following: House Bill 2714, which seeks to make into law that districts must tell parents their rights about testing. Parents already have the right to tell a district that their child does not have to take a test. It is the same right parents use when they decide to go on vacation during the school year.

I also ask you and the paper you represent to call out the overreach that creates a deceptive environment that school districts have been required to put forth. Have we come to the point where we have to deceive parents in order to maintain our schools?

Parents, you have the final say over whether your child is to take this standardized test, and don't let the districts bully you or use soft-spoken terms to change your mind about it. If enough of you say no to this, our teachers will begin to focus on what they are supposed to teach, rather than teaching how to do well on a certain type of test.  
Please contact your state representative about HB 2714 and encourage them to add it to the current statutes.



"YOU WERE WEAVING ALL OVER THE ROAD, YOU BLEW A 0.2 ON THE BREATHALYZER AND YOU CAN'T WALK A STRAIGHT LINE... CONGRATULATIONS, YOU APPEAR TO BE SECRET SERVICE MATERIAL."

### BLUE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOND

#### BMCC bond measure a good deal

Editor,  
This coming May, Blue Mountain Community College will be presenting a bond to their regional service area for consideration. I strongly encourage you to read and learn more about what they are offering. Given what it will do for students, for expanding needed educational opportunities and for our region's economic development, I would strongly support a YES vote.

The bond will do many things. First, it will provide for much-needed repairs and maintenance for all of its facilities in the region at Hermiston, Boardman, Pendleton and Milton-Freewater campuses. Much of these renovation updates and repairs have been deferred for years. BMCC is over 50 years old. Think about it. How many of us are driving a 50-year-old car as our daily driving and living in a house over 50 years old? And if you are, I guarantee you would have been making repairs on those items to keep them operating. Much is the case with BMCC. Consider that they have over 10,000 enrolled students, staff and visitors in and out of their facilities throughout the year.

Next, BMCC, in order to keep pace with technology and new job skill requirements, must update programs and provide new programs that simply did not exist five to 10 years ago. This bond will implement a precision irrigated agriculture program, an agriculture center of excellence and industrial equipment for diesel, dental and nursing programs.

Lastly, the bond, with its new programs will provide workers for our regional employment needs and fill jobs, thus promoting sound economic development for our whole region (Heppner, Boardman, Umatilla, Hermiston, Pendleton and Milton-Freewater) as well as keeping some of our best and brightest people in our area.

The bond cost is reasonable and is lower than the previously retired BMCC bond as well as the last bond request, with a cost of only

\$36.25 for the median home in Umatilla County. This bond is not just a good deal, it's a great deal. Vote yes.

JER PRATTON  
HERMISTON

#### Hermiston chamber supports BMCC bond

Editor,  
The Greater Hermiston Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors is happy to support Blue Mountain Community College's bond measure that is on the May 19 ballot.

I was on the Chamber board of directors when the previous bond measure was on the ballot, and while we (the Chamber) supported it, I had reservations. I was concerned about the apparent lack of engagement by the industries that stood to benefit the most from the money. I didn't understand the need for yet another rodeo arena in the area, and I couldn't wrap my mind around the large sums of money that were in the measure for repairs, maintenance and upgrades. As a result of those concerns, I have spent a great deal of time with BMCC President Cam Preus discussing the current bond measure and am very pleased with the thoughtful approach that is reflected in how it is put together and what the college wants to spend money on.

This time around, the college has partnered with the OSU Experiment Station to locate the precision irrigated agriculture facility on OSU land. This will bring great benefit to the experiment station and reduce the cost of the project significantly. Additionally, the students who participate in that program will gain the benefit of studying and working on one of, if not the premier experiment station for precision irrigation in the world. BMCC has done the same

thing in Boardman by partnering with the Port of Morrow and many of the companies located there to build a much needed workforce training and early learning center there on land owned by the port. Again, this partnership engages those who will benefit from the facility and reduces the cost of the project significantly.

The college has wisely removed plans for a rodeo arena and instead is working with existing facility owners to find ways to partner and leverage those existing facilities.

Finally, I now understand that the large numbers associated with repairs, maintenance and upgrades to existing facilities really is about protecting our community investment. Existing facilities have air handlers and boilers that were installed back in the 1960s and 1970s. Some of the electrical systems were installed prior to 1989. I am convinced that upgrading and/or replacing many of these systems is the wisest and best use of our money. Understanding the efficiencies that can be gained with new systems, I expect we will see a reduction in operational costs that will pay for many of these improvements over time.

By the way, did you know that 82 percent of students who go through vocational or work force training programs at BMCC stay and work in the area? That is an astounding number. If you want our young people to stay and raise families here and contribute to keeping our area's economic engine running, the \$36.25 per year this bond represents for an average homeowner in the greater Hermiston area is a great investment.

So, personally, and on behalf of the Greater Hermiston Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, I urge you to vote yes for the BMCC bond.

JOSEPH FRANELL, CHAIRMAN  
CHAMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Letters Policy

The Hermiston Herald welcomes original letters for publication on public issues and public policies. Submitted letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. Phone numbers will not be published. Letters may be mailed to the Hermiston Herald, 333 E. Main, Hermiston, OR, 97838; or emailed to editor@hermistonherald.com

### THANK YOU

#### Altrusa club support for literacy appreciated

Editor,  
On behalf of the Armand Larive Middle School Language Arts Department, I would like to thank the Altrusa Club of Hermiston for supporting literacy in our school. Literacy Foundation chairs Karen Zacharias and Angela Pursel worked with our school to bring in Maureen McQuerry as a guest author. Mrs. McQuerry spent the day with our eighth-grade language arts students. She gave five presentations and spent two hours working on writing with a group of

15 sixth- through eighth-grade students. Not only did Altrusa bring in this fabulous author, they sponsored a writing contest in which the winners received Barnes & Noble gift certificates and a set of Mrs. McQuerry's books. Our library also received a set of her books.

What a way to celebrate Read Across America: an author, books and a writing workshop, all thanks to Altrusa of Hermiston. We appreciate you.

CORINNE APPLIGATE  
ARMAND LARIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL LANGUAGE ARTS

### ELECTED OFFICIALS

#### STATE

**District 29: Sen. Bill Hansell**, R-Umatilla Co., 900 Court St. N.E., S-423, Salem, OR 97301, 503-986-1729. 101 S.W. Third St., Pendleton, OR 97801 (541) 278-1396. E-mail: ssen.billhansell@state.or.us.

**District 30: Sen. Ted Ferrio-li**, R-John Day; 900 Court St. N.E., S-223 Salem, OR 97301, 503-986-1950. 750 W. Main, John Day, OR 97845, (541) 575-2321. E-mail: ferrio-li.sen@state.or.us.

**District 58: Rep. Bob Jenson**, R-Pendleton; 900 Court St. N.E., H-480, Salem, OR 97301, 503-986-

1458. 2126 N.W. 21st., Pendleton, OR 97801, (541) 276-2707. E-mail: rep.bobjenson@state.or.us.

**District 57: Rep. Greg Smith**, R-Morrow, 900 Court St. N.E., H-280, Salem, OR 97301, 503-986-1457. P.O. Box 215, Heppner, OR 97836, (541) 676-5154. E-mail: smith.g.rep@state.or.us.

#### FEDERAL

**U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden**  
Sac Annex Building, 105 Fir St., No. 201, La Grande, OR 97850, (541) 962-7691. E-mail: kathleen\_cathey@wyden.senate.gov; (Kathleen Cathey, community repre-

sentative); 717 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, (202) 224-5244.

**U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley**  
One World Trade Center, 121 SW Salmon Street, Suite 1250, Portland, OR 97204; (503) 326-3386; Dirksen Senate Office Building, SDB-40B, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-3753.

**U.S. Rep. Greg Walden (2nd District)**  
843 E. Main St., Suite 400, Medford, OR 97504, (541) 776-4646, (800) 533-3303; 2352 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515, (202) 225-6730